863 place. These women were wives of the same husband at Libombo near Rikatla and the foster mother claimed compensation for her deed. Another wonderful case is the following : a woman died shortly after the birth of her boy called Mayimbule ; the

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Thonga calabashes

The smaller are used for keeping medicinal powders (tinkumbulwa). The next in size (mukhoki) are employed for the nkhokoyana. Those with the long necks are the mutchoko, used as bottles or for drinking.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

765 this between his great toes. He bends his body and rubs the
783 two great toes against one another. Then he turns his back to
604 the place and goes away. He must not look behind : it is taboo. Then the other relatives say : " Let us all go and *luma milomo*. " He has given them the right to do so.

765 A little of the *milomo* is carefully kept in a pot for months.
783 When relatives who were absent on the day of the death come back from Johannesburg or from elsewhere, they must perform this ceremony before entering the village and eating any food in it. " Ba yila muti " — " they are taboo to the village." The rule applies only to relatives. Other people may very well eat from the deceased's store of food without any harm, as its contamination is dangerous only to his family. Another variety of this rite consists in preparing light beer with the mealies of the dead and taking first one mouthful which must be spat out on the right side, then a second one on the left side, after which one is allowed to drink.

765 The *gardens* of the deceased must also be purified, and this is
783 done by the rite called *baninga mabele*, to give light to the mealies.
415 The widows and all the female relatives go to his fields holding an old and empty *shikutja*. The shikutja is the hard shell of a sala fruit, the size of an orange, in which has been kept the provision of vegetable *tihuhlu* fat (see Part IV) and which is still impregnated with it. The women set fire to it and walk through the gardens holding it up and illuminating the fields. This is perhaps in relation to the idea that death means darkness, and that its contamination is " black " (ntima) so long as the cleansing has not taken place.

765 During the five days of the Great Mourning, relatives and
574 friends come to pay the *official mourning visit* (1). They enter the village, the women shouting their lamentations (mikulungwana). Some one leads them to the grave and they walk round it uttering cries of mourning, taking leave of the deceased. At the burial of Sokis, I heard a woman saying with a trembling voice : " Goodbye! You have gone! Do not forget us. Remember Mulalen."

(1) This visit can be paid one, two, or three months later on, because, as they say, " nkosi a psi boli, " — " the mourning does not get rotten." But it is only during the five days that dances take place.

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

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the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

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Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well ; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

[415]

Phot. A. de Manros.

Shiluvane girls returning from the well.

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The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood ; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

during the first year of her married life a woman is not allowed to plant them. 244 824

Amongst the Ba-Pedi of the Transvaal the planting of Kafir peas is taboo. They are said to prevent rain and to cause intense and injurious heat.

c) *The Kafir bean*, mbawen, yi-tin, (Ro.), nyawa, yi-tin, (Dj.), is a small round brownish seed, with a pleasant flavour, eaten either green or dry. I do not know of any taboo in regard to it. 244

Vegetables of other families also contribute to the food of the Thongas.

Sweet potatoes (nhlata, mu-mi) cultivated either in the sand of the hills or in the richer nyaka of the marshes, are a great resource, especially when they are farinaceous and not too watery. Their leaves (matsimbo) are also used as a vegetable.

Pumpkins also constitute one of the chief articles of diet of the Blacks, from one end of Africa to the other. They are of several kinds : the *ranga* (dji-ma) and *gawana* (dji-ma) of medium size, the *shilutana*, small, sometimes pear-shaped, the *khalabatla* (djima), huge water melons, with white or pink pulp and black pips, which are eaten both cooked and uncooked. Pumpkins are not grown for their fruit alone, as the leaves of certain kinds, especially the ranga, are excellent eating, and make a very good substitute for spinach. The flowers also are greatly appreciated by the Natives. Some kinds of pumpkins are used to make gourds and calabashes. (See I. p. 50.) 415 824

There are some taboos to be mentioned in connection with the *ranga*, which seems to be the oldest kind of pumpkin known to the Bantus (1). We have seen (I. p. 184) that girls are not allowed to walk amongst the leaves and must take special precautions when plucking them. It is taboo to plant any kind of pumpkin before the Chief and the sub-chief. They are subject to the law of hierarchy in the same way as Kafir corn. The prohibition is so conscientiously observed that, should an old man keep the people waiting and be too slow in planting his 244 753 824

(1) See in Meinhof, *Grundriss einer Lautlehre der Bantusprachen*, p. 183, the different forms of this word, which was *tanga* in Ur-Bantu. Compare Torrend, *Comparative Grammar of the South African Languages*, p. 89.

273 warm them, and someone must keep watch all night, removing the scum and preventing the liquid from rising or overflowing. It then ferments and becomes very alcoholic. Where shiwaya-waya is drunk, quarrels and blows are sure to follow. The [415] accompanying plate from a photograph, taken near Antioka (Khosen), shows a primitive Native press used for the preparation

Sugar-cane press, Magule (Khosen country). *Phot. A. Clac.*

of sugar-cane drink. The crushing operation takes place in the large hollowed trunk of a tree and the liquid flows out, through a pipe fixed in its lower extremity, into a pot.

177 273 The *shikokiyane* is prepared from Golden Syrup bought from the stores. A large quantity of tins of this harmless "missionary jam," as it is called in South Africa, imported into Johannesburg, are used not by missionaries but by Natives of the Compounds who brew shikokiyane in big empty oil cans. Some of the more civilised do quite a trade in this strong drink, selling it illicitly on Sundays to their unsophisticated brethren, who thus

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Ornaments, calabashes, pottery.

Another taboo in connection with the making of a pot is this: when a pot has been fired, it must still be *tested*; this operation is called *ku khangula*, or *kwangula*, and is performed in the following way. A little water is poured into it, and the potteress washes it thoroughly; then some grains of maize are cooked in it and thrown away. This is to remove the *nkwangu*, or *nkhangu*, viz., the danger attending the use of an untested, unpurified pot: people using such an implement would suffer from an eruption on the arms, and even on the whole body. To give any one food to eat from a pot which has not been *khangula* is looked on as an act of hatred.

Phot. D. Lenoh.

Pots used to draw water.

The pot, or boiler, used for cooking is called *nhlambeto* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *mbita* (yin-tin Dj.); it has a very wide opening. Smaller boilers are also made, even quite diminutive ones called *shihlembetwana* or *shimbitana*. The beer jar (khuwana, dji-ma), illustrated on page 101, No. 13, is of the same size as the boiler, but can be easily recognised by its straighter neck. Enormous beer jars are sometimes manufactured, perfect amphoras (hotjo, yin-tin), but they rarely stand the firing and are therefore scarce and expensive, fetching as much as ten shillings each: they may be two feet high; the ordinary cooking pot does not cost more than sixpence. The porringers, or large plates, are called *mbenga* (mu,-mi; No. 12) (1).

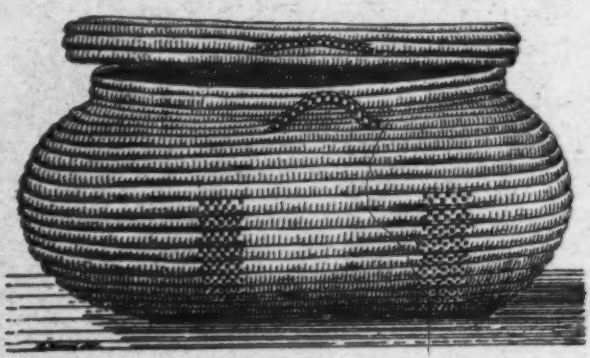
Shibindji clay is also used for making very short *pipes* (shipana), prettily shaped, probably in imitation of the European cutty. Smoking does not seem to be an indigenous habit; in the interior

(1) No. 11, on page 101, shows a small vase modelled by a young Native girl, an invalid from Natal (Station of Inanda).

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

pot with the red brown milala in alternate layers, until the utensil is full : water is then poured over them and the whole put on to boil ; very soon the straw becomes a brilliant black. The basket-maker has now only to pull up some of the grass growing in the hollow near the lake, dry it, and he is ready to commence work.

In the accompanying plates illustrations will be found of the principal specimens of this art, stereotyped shapes which have passed on from generation to generation, doubtless from



Ngula.

prehistoric times, and are called respectively : *ngula*, *hwama*, *shihundju*, *lihlelo* and *nhluto*.

The *ngula* (yin-tin) (p. 27) takes the place of honour, and is the most prized of all the Ronga baskets. It requires days or even weeks of continuous work to make one, but the result is worthy of the time and labour bestowed upon it ; I brought with me to Europe several *ngula* of various sizes. The particular one shown below, is oval and measures six feet two inches in circumference ; but there are many much larger, both spheroid and ovoid. This is how they make or, to use the technical Native term, "tlhaba" — "pierce" this basket. The workman takes his dried grass and plaits it, lengthening the plait according to requirements, as he goes along : this plait is bound round, and entirely hidden, by a special binding of palm leaf straw, thus forming a thickish cord of about half an inch in diameter ; the cord is soon doubled back upon itself, and forms a centre, around which

285 on the basket pointing upward while those on the cover point downward, so that they meet. Two rings are also plaited, and passed round through each pair of handles, forming simple but solid hinges on which the cover can turn without ever being separated from the basket, of which it is henceforward an integral part. A well-made ngula is absolutely impermeable, and not the smallest hole can be found in it. I think it would even hold water. Such a basket is surely a work of art!

285 The ngula is the Native's Savings Bank. In it he keeps all
415 his riches, the best grains of maize, or the best grown monkey nuts, reserved for seed at the next rainy season ; also the material with which the women will deck themselves on grand occasions, etc. The enormous basket reposes at the far end of the hut, on a low table (buhiri) specially designed for the purpose. The ngula of the northern clans, where palm leaves are not to be found, is more rounded and the palm straw replaced by solid dry grass. (See the adjoining illustration, p. 121.)

285 While the ngula is enthroned in the hut, and is never moved out
415 of it, the *hwama* (yin-tin, Ro.) or *funeko* (Dj.) (p. 124 No. 4 and 6),
293 on the contrary, is the wallet of the traveller. It is a square bag made of plaited palm straw. The cover is about as large as the bag itself and, so that it may not be lost (which might easily happen while travelling), it is secured by the string used as a shoulder strap to carry the *hwama*, this being passed through it. The bag can thus be opened by sliding the cover right along the string, but it cannot be entirely separated from it. These bags are of different sizes, some more ornamental than others. A round variety is also made by a certain basket-maker of Masana. He makes three or four projecting horns to his hwama, which then takes a cylindrical shape, and has the advantage of being able to stand upright when placed on the ground. This bag or basket, is called *shiraba* or *baki* (No. 2) ; it is the kind used by the magicians for carrying their medicines, and bones.

285 The third classic shape of Ronga basket-ware (No. 3) is the
482 *shihundju* (Ro.) *shirundju* (Dj.), the conical basket employed by the women for transporting maize, clay and manure. (It is by no means certain that the shihundju is cleaned out between

these several loads!) It is made in much the same way as the roof of a hut, point downwards, ribs of folioles taking the place of sticks. This basket may be said to be the special property of the women (1) : they are very clever at balancing it on their heads ; it is very rarely that a woman, old or young, lets her shihundju fall. When empty it is turned upside down and serves as a hat. It is a really pretty sight to see the young girls starting out for the fields with their conical baskets standing straight up on their fuzzy locks. When they are travelling and arrive at a friendly village, they hold themselves perfectly upright, shooting glances here and there without stooping or turning their heads, till their friends rush out to meet them, seize their shihundju and place them on the ground, in small holes which they hastily make in the sand. This is the first duty of hospitality amongst women!

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The *lihlelo* (No. 8) is used by cooks for winnowing the maize. Palm leaves not being sufficiently strong for this purpose, the lihlelo is made of the roots, of a tree called *nukanhlelo* (a kind of mimosa), cut into strips, and is coated with a reddish brown varnish prepared from mangrove bark. It is the lihlelo, or rather a smaller basket of the same sort called *ndjewane*, that the housewife takes with her when picking the small wild cucumbers, or gathering the various herbs which serve for the supplementary noontide luncheon.

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In the northern clans one often meets with a spherical basket made of the same material as the winnowing basket and covered with an ordinary lihlelo.

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Besides the foregoing, the Ba-Ronga have two or three baskets which are not in such general use : the *nhlaba*, a kind of plaited bag with interstices between the palm straws, for carrying fish, the *ntjaba*, etc.

Another article, which might, at first sight, be taken for a basket, but which serves quite a different purpose, is the *nhluto*, the strainer. (No. 1.) This unusually shaped strainer is a sort of long bag of plaited straw into which is poured the beer made

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(1) The male members of the family are called "ba matlhari, those of the assagai" and the female "ba-shihundju, those of the basket," as these objects are characteristic of each sex.

1 [See p. 124 -- Analyst]

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Thonga basket work.
(One sixth of the natural size.)

285 from maize : the particles floating in this liquor are caught by the
415 straws overlapping the top, or accumulate at the bottom, whilst
273 the liquid filters through the interstices of the plait. The thick sediment remaining in the strainer can then be squeezed so as to extract all the beer. This straining and squeezing has the effect of rendering the drink much more alcoholic (p. 40).

285 The art of basket-making is by no means commonplace. Practised by men only, it is, in certain families, in certain villages,

Phot. A. Burd.

Carrying libhelo baskets, grinding and pounding mealies.

handed down from father to son. Children with a natural taste for this sort of work are initiated into its mysteries by their parents. But no young man is ever forced to take up the profession of a basket-maker. His heart (mbilu) must be in it! Amongst primitive peoples art, and even industry, always remains a matter of individual genius. It never becomes a mechanical output, as is the case in the factories of the civilised world : for this reason it retains a character of individuality, sincerity and natural beauty, not always to be met with in the products of XXth century European industry!

2: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

advantage of not easily splitting or cracking when being dried. If Nature had not bestowed on the Thongas this excellent tree, who knows if they would have ever thought of executing the works of art which are depicted in the accompanying illustration!

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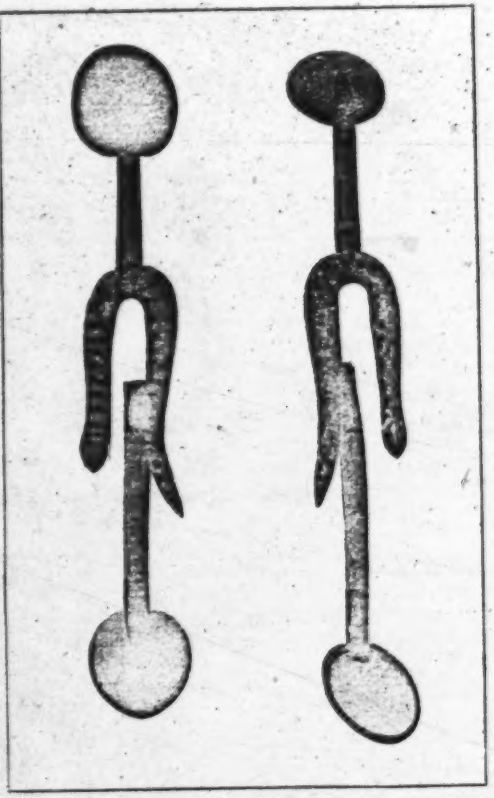

Carved spoon from Maputju country.

However before thinking of art, they began by cutting, or fashioning, with their small knives, articles of every day use: *spoons* (nkombe, mu mi) for instance, (see illustrations of carvings, No. 1), made in several sizes; the big one is used for serving out the potful of maize amongst the rightful claimants, and the small one for conveying food to the mouth when the hands are ritually soiled (I. p. 193). One often finds really well carved spoons. I give drawings of two which are particularly interesting; the first shows a sort of spiral, or catherine-wheel decoration at the top of the handle (No. 4); the other, brought by Dr. Audeoud from the Maputju country, has a carved snake as an ornamental motive. Spoons are all ornamented, even the plainest, with designs in black, burnt into the wood with a red-hot iron. For beer, ladles are used, made of a single piece of wood; these are generally decorated with large black triangles (No. 2). In Inhambane and Quelimane, the Natives make them of cocoa nut

shells, on which they carve curious geometrical figures (No. 5). 322
Goblets (ntcheko, mu-mi) are generally made with a handle. 531
(No. 6). 415

In the accompanying plate, (p. 131), two spoons are seen hanging to a *chain* made of links carved from nkuhlu wood. This is a wonderful product of Native art. These chains are often met with, especially in the Northern clans, some with links of six inches in length, the whole attaining to a length of many yards. The one here shown is six feet long, with links of only three inches. The special point to be noted in this "objet d'art" is that it has been carved from a single piece of wood and the artist had to make no mistake from the very beginning; a single slip of the knife would have broken the whole chain and made it useless. European joiners told me they doubted whether an ordinary workman would be able to carve such a chain. I was told that these spoon-chains were used by two individuals who wished to form an alliance; they passed the chain over their shoulders and, so united, ate from the same plate. This, however, is mere play and has no ritual value.

Between the two spoons, a kind of *bowl* is seen, almost perfectly round and prettily decorated. It was used by a man who had been possessed, and who washed his face in it every day to cool his head and appease the spirits. Thongas also carve large dishes, sometimes prettily decorated, though not so attractive as those of the Ba-Rotse of the Zambezi. I possess one of two feet in length by 10 inches in width. These are used for serving meat.

I must not forget the *mortars* (tshuri, dji-ma) usually made of mahogany, or of nkanye, and the pestles (musi, mu-mi) made of nkonono. The former are often adorned with triangular carvings.

The same style of decoration is to be seen on the *calabashes* which Natives use as bottles. The calabash, as every one knows, is a sort of gourd composed of two spheres of unequal size with a narrow connection between them. By an ingenious system of supports, placed under the gourd during its growth, Natives succeed in imparting to the upper sphere the shape of an elongated neck. There are many varieties of calabash, some small, furnished

with a long projection and used for drawing the bukanye from the large jars. They are specially kept for this purpose! (See p. 101, No. 7, and also I, p. 400). In Vol. I. p. 50, I have given an

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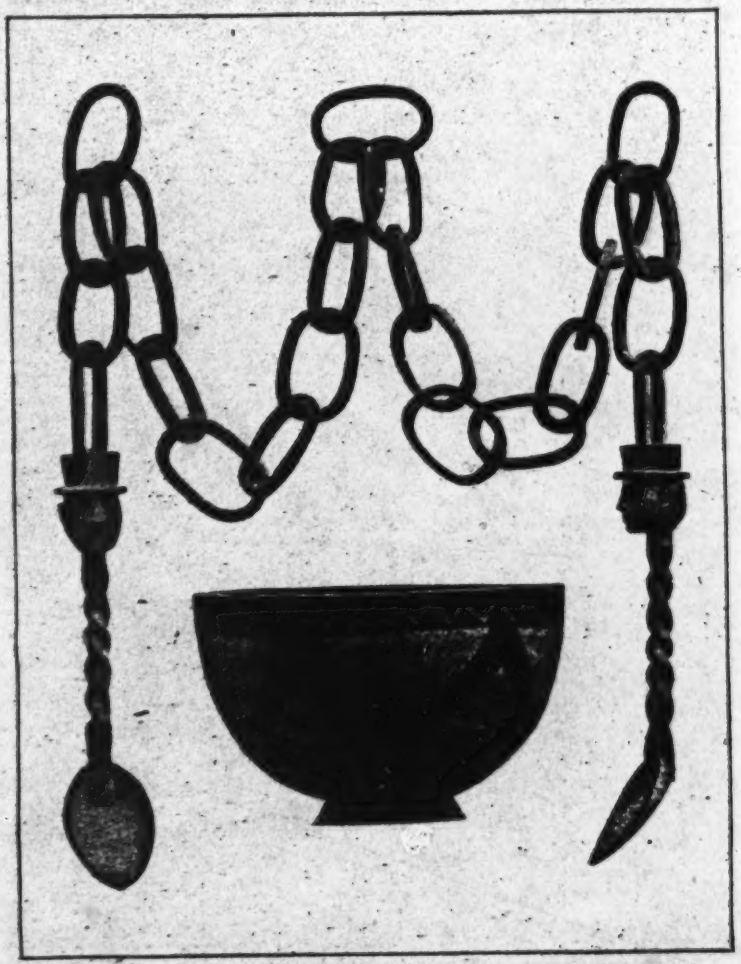

Carved chain and bowl, (Neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques).
(One fifth of the natural size.)

illustration of these bukanye calabashes, called *ntjeko* (mu-mi), very prettily decorated by a Tembe artist. The black designs are burnt in and represent huts, birds, palm trees and, last but not least, two warriors fighting! The white dots are beads inserted

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Phot. H. Grut.

Thonga kitchen ware.

in the soft bark of the calabash. The largest calabash on this plate measures 21 inches in length and 7 in width.

Some plainer calabashes are Nos. 8 and 9 of the illustration of ornaments. Others are simply shells of sala (shikutja), (p. 16), with a good-sized hole cut in them for an opening (Nos. 6 and 10); a circular piece, say one third the size of the other, makes a capital cover; a string passes through the bottom of the calabash and the middle of the cover, fastening the two together. When this is knotted on top of the latter the *lard tin* is securely closed. This kind of calabash is generally thus designated, for it is in these round balls that the mafureira grease is kept, to which I have previously referred (p. 18). They are hung up in the roof of the hut where they swing to and fro in the smoke and become well browned. The young folks amuse themselves by carving designs on these shells.

Maakhelu's stick.

The artistic element is still more striking in the *snuff boxes* (ngulana, yin-tin), carved in ebony, which the chiefs are fond of carrying; the one depicted (p. 128, No. 9) came to me from Mavabaze who was, for a time, chief of the Khosa clan. It is also conspicuous in the strange *pillows* (shidamu) on which the Ba-Ronga rest their heads at night. Let us contemplate this article (No. 8) with the respect it deserves! It is probably on this description of pillow that primitive humanity in all parts of the world has dreamed its dreams! We see it sculptured on the Egyptian monuments, above or by the side of princely couches. We find also among the relics of the lake-dwellers stone objects of a similar shape, which were doubtless used for the same purpose. The Bantu has adhered to this piece of prehistoric furniture all through the ages.

one or two hundred years ago, gave birth to an entirely new and original decorative art; during the last century, the contest with a tribe better clothed than themselves led them to adopt a different and more decent costume. (Compare "Introduction à la Grammaire ronga" § XXXI.) When copper and brass wire became procurable, they not only made pretty bracelets, but invented quite a new art, the weaving of belts,

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Phot. Denton.

Manual work at the Lemana Training School (Northern Transvaal).

(p. 101 No. 1), egg-cups, and cups of various forms very different from those of European make.

The ability of the Native to progress in industry cannot be doubted when one sees the results of the industrial teaching they receive in many Missionary Institutions. The Swiss Romande Missionaries have introduced, in their schools, the manufacture of baskets and mats with the materials found in the country, and the results of the experiment have been altogether in favour of the intelligence of the Natives, as shown in the accompanying illustration. One of the pupils of Shiluvane even invented a new form of basket, made with a single leaf of a big palm tree (*[illegible]*) growing in the Leydsdorp plain. In those institutions